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CHRISTMAS CAROLS.

BY NORA HOPPER.

THE EVE OF MARY.

Sing out, and with rejoicing bring
Shepherds and neatherds to their King—
 Their King who lies in stable-stall,
With straw for all His plenishing;
 Who in His hands most weak and small
Doth hold the earth and heavens all:
 Sing loud, the Eve of Mary!

Bring in the soft ewes and their rams,
And bring the little crying lambs;
 This stable's wide enough for all.
Bring hither all the bleating dams,
 And bid them crouch around the stall,
And watch the wonders that befall
 Earth, on the Eve of Mary.

This mother-maid with drooping head
Hath but a straw-heap to her bed;
 Yet, did she list, would angels come
And make a palace of her shed,
 With myrrh and music bring Him home—
'Mid these glad mouths the one mouth dumb—
 Here, on the Eve of Mary.

But rather would she lie below
Thatched roof, and hear the north wind blow,
 And pattering footsteps of the rain.

Ay, rather would she pay her throe
 And take her joy : to quit all pain
 His lips are on her breast again—
 Sing low, the Eve of Mary !

Sing low, indeed ; and softly bleat,
 You lambing ewes, about her feet,
 Lest ye should wake the Child from sleep.
 No other hour so still and sweet
 Shall fall for Mary's heart to keep,
 Until her death-hour on her creep—
 Sing soft, the Eve of Mary !

CAROL OF MARY AND MARIAMNE

Was a Maiden sweet to see,
 White and pure as lilies be ;
 Black as bird's wing was her hair
 Folded meekly on her brows ;
 Like a moonbeam in the house
 Went she, leaving blessings there.
 Joseph, the old carpenter,
 Saw, and loved, and wedded her.

Was a Lady great and fair,
 With red gold upon her hair—
 Plaited full and purfled deep.
 Herod took her for his bride,
 Set her splendid at his side,
 Kissed her doubts and fears to sleep.
 High-born dame and peasant may
 Wedded on the selfsame day.

Mariamne's gold-shod feet
 Were too dainty for the street ;
 Barefoot the girl Mary went
 From her mother to her lord.
 Mariamne's bosom-bird